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ANIMAL ISSUES TASK FORCE

Monday, January 14, 2013

6:00 p.m.

4th Floor Conference Room – Busch Municipal Building

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mary Collette, Chairwoman; Carl Woodland, Janet Martin, Gwen Evans, Alicia Mathis, Kathleen Cowens, and Carrie Galvan.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Rita Wittu, Dr. Michael Stafford, Randall Voss, Christian Mechlin, and Cindy Larson.

Note: Dr. Stafford is no longer the Health Department's contract Veterinarian; however, Dr. David Weddle will be serving as the new contract Veterinarian; Randall Voss wishes to no longer serve; however, Karenanne Fitzsimmons, who is the Chairwoman of the Southwest Humane Society Board is willing to serve on the Task Force; Christian Mechlin and Cindy Larson have both resigned due to conflicts, and there are no replacements for these two positions at this time.

STAFF PRESENT: Clay Goddard, and Mike Brothers, Health Department; and Anita Baker Climer, City Clerk's Office.

GUESTS: Dr. David Weddle, Karenanne Fitzsimmons, Jim Swain, and Nicole Fowler, Citizens; and Mary Crawford, SAAHouse Spay and Neuter Clinic.

Chairwoman Mary Collette called the meeting to order at approximately 6:04 p.m.; however, no quorum was present until Alicia Mathis arrived at approximately 6:32 p.m. Chairwoman Collette welcomed everyone.

During tonight's meeting, the Task Force briefly discussed the following four current vacancy positions:

Dr. Mike Stafford is no longer the City's contract veterinarian. He will be replaced with Dr. Weddle.

Randall Voss (SW Humane Society) wishes to no longer participate. He will be replaced with Karenanne Fitzsimmons.

Cindy Larsen (citizen), who resigned several months ago.

Christian Mechlin (citizen), who resigned in November 2012.

Chairwoman Collette reported that she feels the two remaining vacancy positions should be filled, which the Task Force discussed.

Clay Goddard, Assistant Director-Springfield/Greene County Health Department, noted that the names for the vacancy replacements would need to be presented to the City Council for approval before he/she would be official members of the Task Force.

Following the discussion, the Task Force reviewed and modified their wording/terms regarding Recommendation No. 2 in relations to programs. *(Please refer to Exhibit A located within the City Clerk's Office for additional information.)*

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Nicole Fowler, Citizen, and Animal Control Officer, briefly discussed that the Animal Shelter currently has a student volunteer internship program through Drury University, which took some time to implement due to the numerous steps involved (i.e. paperwork, and legality, etc.).

The Task Force and Mr. Goddard discussed that a qualified volunteer coordinator would be needed to help coordinate and facilitate a training program for volunteers in the future, which would need funding.

During the discussion, the Task Force briefly addressed that they feel an advisory board versus a task force should be established to continually address the issue of animals within the Community in the future.

Mr. Goddard and Ms. Fowler informed the Task Force that Animal Control works with approximately 50 various 501C3 “rescue” groups/organizations that are licensed and approved, some of which are more breed specific than others, who help rescue dogs from the Animal Shelter. Mr. Goddard informed the Task Force that City staff may be able to list some of these “rescue” groups/organizations on the Health Department’s Animal Control webpage if the Task Force prefers versus requesting that individuals contact Animal Control for a list, but a disclaimer would probably be needed.

Ms. Fowler noted that some “rescue” groups/organizations have not been willing to work cooperatively with Animal Control at times, so some groups/organizations have better working relationships with Animal Control than others.

The Task Force also discussed that they feel “community cats” (formerly termed as feral) should be relocated back to the original location that they were picked up from.

Ms. Fowler briefly addressed that she feels local residents, who originally requested and wanted the “community cats” picked up by Animal Control due to nuisance issues, probably does not want these cats returned back to the pick-up location. She noted an animal control officers responsibility is to remove nuisances concerns, such as “community cats,” not to remove them and bring them back to the location.

Chairwoman Collette and Mr. Goddard reported that the Task Force has not yet addressed how or who would possibly be returning the “community cats” back to the original location, which should be addressed within Recommendation No. 3 relating to policies and legislation, which has not yet been reviewed.

Gwen Evans briefly expressed that she feels education will be needed in relations to “community cats.”

Chairwoman Collette informed the Task Force that she feels the City’s Law Department would probably be reviewing the recommendations from the Task Force for the City Council. She added that Recommendation No. 1 relating to possibly a new animal shelter has already been sent to the City Council for their information.

Following further discussion, the Task Force finalized their modifications in relations to Recommendation No. 2.

Per a consensus, the Task Force decided to wait regarding approving the finalized Recommendation No. 2 relating to programs until they review Recommendation No. 3 relating to policies and legislation.

Due to time limitations, the Task Force decided to postpone their review/modification regarding Recommendation No. 3 at this time.

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Chairwoman Collette requested that the issue of breed specific legislation be included on their next meeting agenda.

The Task Force reviewed the meeting minutes of December 3, 2012.

Ms. Mathis moved to approve the December 3, 2012 meeting minutes as presented.

Ms. Evans seconded the motion, and it was approved.

Chairwoman Collette asked that the Task Force members to promptly leave the building upon the adjournment of the meeting, so the Busch Municipal Building can be closed, and thanked everyone for their cooperation and assistance.

The Task Force discussed conducting another meeting in March.

Ms. Mathis informed that Task Force that due to teaching responsibilities this spring, she would be unavailable on Monday evenings until approximately 7:00 p.m.

Anita Baker Climer, City Clerk's Office, noted that if a quorum of the Task Force is not obtained within approximately 20 minutes, the representative from the Clerk's Office is obligated to leave, because an official meeting cannot occur without a quorum of members present. She briefly explained that due to the Sunshine Law an appropriate meeting posting is needed to inform the public of the appropriate meeting, location, and time.

Per a consensus of the Task Force, a meeting was scheduled for Monday, March 4, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in the 4th Floor Conference Room – Busch Municipal Building.

Mr. Goddard informed the Task Force that City staff would reformat the finalized version regarding Recommendation No. 2 in relations to programs, and would send it out to the Task Force in the future.

Following the discussion, the Task Force meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.